

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of this application in view of the following amendments and remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been amended in such manner as to distinguish the invention more clearly over the cited prior art. The vapor deposition coating has been specified as CrN, overcoming the rejection of claim 1 based on Beyer alone. Dependant claim 11 has been cancelled. Claim 1 has further been amended to specify the nature of the CrN surface of the piston ring. In particular, the vapor deposition CrN coating surface is present in its as-applied, unground state. The remained of the contact surface profile is specified as being fabricated of a cross member portion of the base member material which also has an outer ground surface that is at the same level as the CrN surface and has a sharp-edged contact surface edge provided at at least one of the side surfaces. This combination of features is neither shown nor suggested by Beyer alone or in combination with Anderson and/or Ishida. The surface of Beyer is entirely ground at ref. 12. and neither Anderson nor Ishida teach providing a vapor deposition coating of CrN on only a portion of the contact surface of a finished piston ring that extends over only a portion of the outer surface, is in its as-applied surface condition, is adjacent a base member portion (cross member) of the piston ring at the same level as the CrN, with the adjacent base member portion having a ground surface and being at the same level as the CrN surface, and which has a sharp-edged corner between the cross member and at least one of the side surfaces of the ring. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1, as amended, distinguishes applicants' invention patentably over the cited prior art and should be allowed.

Claim 11 has been amended to specify that the piston ring is made and finished according to a method that does not disturb the as-applied surface of the vapor deposition coating. This is neither taught nor suggested by Beyer, alone or in combination with Anderson and/or Ishida. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 11, as amended, distinguishes applicants' invention patentably over the cited prior art and should be allowed.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge or refund any fee deficiency or excess to Deposit Account No. 04-1061 in the name of Dickinson Wright, PLLC.

Respectfully submitted,

DICKINSON WRIGHT, PLLC

Date: February 2, 2009

By: /Robert L. Stearns/  
Robert L. Stearns, Reg. No. 36,937  
Attorney for Applicant

DICKINSON WRIGHT, PLLC  
38525 Woodward Ave., Ste. 2000  
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304-5092  
Tel: 248-433-7200  
[RStearns@dickinsonwright.com](mailto:RStearns@dickinsonwright.com)